



January 25, 2021

Attn: Loni Fournier
Senior Planner
CC: Heather Charles Lis
Town of Hingham
210 Central Street
Hingham, MA 02043
Phone (781) 741-1419

**RE: Conservation Commission Review
Proposed Warehouse – 60 Research Road**

Dear Ms. Fournier, Ms. Charles Lis and Members of the Board;

This letter is being submitted in response to the comments provided by Ms. Loni Fournier of the Hingham Conservation Commission (HCC) via email on December 31, 2020, regarding the Relocated Driveway Project at 6 New Towne Drive in Hingham, Massachusetts. Crocker Design Group, LLC (CDG) has reviewed the comments and offers the following responses to each comment below. In addition, the following revised and supporting documents are enclosed:

- Site Plans with revision date of 1/25/2021

Original comments provided by HCC indicated below in standard text with CDG's response in **bold text**.

Comment 1: The narrative indicates that 131sqft within the 50ft buffer zone will be disturbed, but the only values that follow are in linear feet (retaining wall and guardrail). Can you clarify what the 131sqft value represents? Is it the footprint of the retaining wall? Or perhaps you're accounting for vegetated disturbance?

CDG Response: The disturbance area provided in the Stormwater Report narrative for the 50ft Buffer Zone accounts for the assumed vegetation disturbance for the installation of the wall and guardrail.

Comment 2: Can you identify the species of trees being removed? I note that the Commission's tree policy requires the replacement trees to match, but if substitutions are needed to ensure that the trees survive, due to site conditions, I think the Commission would support those. I also note that tall pine trees, such as red and white pine, planted close to existing homes often make

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owners nervous once they reach full height, to the point that owners want them to be removed. You may want to consider a (native) substitution for the proposed red pine trees on the plan.

CDG Response: Please refer to Landscaping Plan enclosed in the revised Plan Set. The species of trees to be removed include four (4) Oaks, and one (1) ash. We have proposed to plant ten (10) replacement trees including two (2) Red Maples, two (2) Eastern Red Cedars, two (2) Basswood, and four (4) White Oaks with a minimum 3" caliper at the time of planting. CDG would be open to discussing substitutions for the proposed tree plantings. Although there is one (1) Ash tree proposed to be removed, the Landscape Architect who assisted us with the Landscaping Plan and tree layout advised against planting Ash trees due to issues with the Emerald Ash Borer in Massachusetts.

Comment 3: Can you also identify the species of evergreen(s) being planted for the hedge? Ideally, a native species would be selected.

CDG Response: The species of evergreen hedge proposed is Boxwood.

Comment 4: I'm a little concerned about a few of the proposed locations for the replacement trees, specifically the three located between the two driveways and the three located on the western edge of the new driveway. These are fairly narrow areas with additional growing constraints. Was the area to the west of the retaining wall contemplated for tree replacements?

CDG Response: Acknowledged. The area to the west of the retaining wall was not originally contemplated for tree replacement in an effort to limit disturbance within the 50ft Buffer Zone. CDG is in agreement that the trees proposed between the driveway and along the western edge of the new driveway are in too narrow and constrained location, and has since revised the proposed locations of the replacement trees to be along the western edge of the proposed driveway.

Comment 5: The Commission typically looks for 1:1 mitigation for new impervious area in the 100ft buffer zone. The narrative indicates that the new impervious area is 1,623sqft, but only 927sqft of seed mix/planting area has been proposed. Is it possible to meet the 1:1 ratio the Commission prefers?

CDG Response: The plans have been revised to include 3,081 SF of buffer mitigation within the 100ft and 50ft buffer zones of the property.

Comment 6: Is the intent to maintain the seed mix as directed or to mow it regularly as lawn? My concern is that the proposed area at the end of the existing driveway will be maintained as lawn, similar to the rest of the property's frontage. Perhaps the seed mix could be shifted to the area west of the retaining wall? Or could additional plantings, such as shrubs or other perennials, be

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incorporated into this area to deter mowing, as well as cars exiting the driveway as they once did?

CDG Response: The area at the end of the existing driveway will likely be mowed and maintained as regular lawn, and therefore has not been included in the buffer mitigation calculations. The areas called out to be seeded with New England Conservation Wildlife Mix will not be mowed and maintained as regular lawn.

Comment 7: I'm having trouble making sense of the existing and proposed tree line on the western edge of the property, as shown on the plan. Based on my site visit, the new driveway appears to be located in an open area between the existing driveway and tree line, with no trees (6" DBH or greater) identified for removal on the western edge. Can you clarify? Or if needed/convenient, I can meet you on site to discuss.

CDG Response: CDG reevaluated the existing tree line shown on the Existing Conditions plan, and revised it to generally follow the limits of the upper bank, while also inclusive of trees 6-inches DBH or greater. CDG performed additional survey to double check that all trees greater than 6-DBH were noted on the plans, and that all species were noted on the revised Existing Conditions plan.

There are no trees identified for removal along the western edge or within the 50-ft Buffer, however, we are concerned about the proximity of two (2) Juniper trees to the proposed wall. They are called out to remain and be protected, but if that is not possible, they will be replaced as close to the original location as possible.

Comment 8: I can't recall from our last conversation on this project... was a permeable surface contemplated for the new driveway?

CDG Response: The maximum proposed slope of the driveway is 7.2% (reduced from 15% in the existing condition. Per the Massachusetts Stormwater Standards, permeable pavement is more appropriate on gentle slopes of less than 5%, and therefore it was not considered for this project.

We look forward to hearing from you on this revised submittal and presenting to the Commission on February 1st.

Should you have any questions or require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact Gabe Crocker, P.E. at gabecrocker@crockerdesigngroup.com or 781-919-0808.

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Sincerely,
Crocker Design Group LLC

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Gabe Crocker". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Gabe" being more prominent than the last name "Crocker".

Gabe Crocker P.E.
President